

## Taking Care of Yourself—5.2020—Grieving as a Community

During this week's discussion, the Resiliency Committee was struck by this definition of "anticipatory grief" from David Kessler. Hopefully, this will resonate with you too.

"We're also feeling anticipatory grief. Anticipatory grief is that feeling we get about what the future holds when we're uncertain. Usually it centers on death. We feel it when someone gets a dire diagnosis or when we have the normal thought that we'll lose a parent someday. Anticipatory grief is also more broadly imagined futures. There is a storm coming. There's something bad out there. With a virus, this kind of grief is so confusing for people. Our primitive mind knows something bad is happening, but you can't see it. This breaks our sense of safety. We're feeling that loss of safety. I don't think we've collectively lost our sense of general safety like this before. Individually or as a smaller groups, people have felt this. But all together, this is new. We are grieving on a micro and a macro level." David Kessler. <https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief>



Virtual Grief Support Group is lead by David Kessler on Facebook. [Click Here for info.](#)

During this pandemic, our usual forms of grieving are extremely different. Funerals are now private, families have to maintain social distancing at the cemetery and services are postponed until later in the year. Also, community members can't show respect to the families in our typical forms. As described by grief specialist Megan Devine, we are being deprived of our comforting rituals and the "casserole train" has been derailed. The articles below provide helpful suggestions for showing respect and comfort to those grieving, as well as ways families can honor and grieve a loss of a family member. There are always ways to support those grieving and to grieve ourselves. As described in a recent Bristol Herald Courier editorial—we can all show "lovingkindness" during these difficult times.

<https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/04/13/999348/covid-19-grief-zoom-funerals/>

<https://www.cnet.com/how-to/how-to-plan-a-remote-funeral-and-grieve-a-loved-one-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>



### Podcast Suggestions:

[\*A Millennials Guide to Saving the World: Grief, Community, Ritual\*](#)  
[\*Shapes of Grief, Episode 44\*](#)

#### Things to avoid saying to someone who's grieving

"It's part of God's plan." This phrase can make people angry and they often respond with, "What plan? Nobody told me about any plan."

"Look at what you have to be thankful for." They know they have things to be thankful for, but right now they are not important.

"He's in a better place now." The bereaved may or may not believe this. Keep your beliefs to yourself unless asked.

"This is behind you now; it's time to get on with your life." Sometimes the bereaved are resistant to getting on with because they feel this means "forgetting" their loved one. Besides, moving on is much easier said than done. Grief has a mind of its own and works at its own pace.

Statements that begin with "You should" or "You will." These statements are too directive. Instead you could begin your comments with: "Have you thought about..." or "You might try..."

Source: American Hospice Foundation

### REMEMBER THESE IMPORTANT TIPS:

- **Maintain a schedule—which also means regular sleep schedule and typical meal schedule**
- **Practice Mindfulness—be present in the moment**
- **If you don't understand a child's school assignment, skip it. You can always come back to it later.**
- **Get outside!**